



CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
Department for Community Based Services
Division of Protection and Permanency

Independent Living Guidelines

Requirements for Extended Commitment

- Youth who decide to extend their commitment will complete a **Transitional Living Support Agreement** where they will indicate their purpose for extending commitment and acknowledge the basic expectations for remaining in care past their 18th birthday such as remaining drug free, refraining from criminal activity, and complying with the rules of their placement.
- Youth must maintain the minimum requirements to remain on extended commitment. Youth who do not maintain these requirements will be placed on an **Extended Commitment Probation Contract**. The requirements include:
 - Attending school on a full-time basis. This includes attending high school or a GED preparatory program, taking 12 hours in college, or being enrolled in a vocational program.
 - Or**
 - Working on a full time-basis (minimum of 30 hours a week).
 - Or**
 - A combination of attending school part time (at least 6 hours in college) and working part time (15-20 hours a week).
 - Or**
 - Exceptions to the minimum requirements will be made for youth with diagnosed disabilities and severe mental health issues. These youth should be receiving support for improving their independent living skills.
- Youth can modify their **Transitional Living Support Agreement** later if they determine their initial purpose (work/school/or both) no longer matches their skill set, interests, or goals.
- To ensure compliance with minimum requirements, youth will provide the following documentation to program staff. The PCC will withhold monthly stipends until youth provide the documentation (excluding \$70.00):
 - Paycheck stubs verifying employment;
 - School schedule (at the beginning of each semester and immediately upon any changes to schedule during the semester); or
 - School transcript (at the end of each semester).
- Youth will notify their case manager and social worker immediately if they drop classes and provide a new school schedule.

- Youth who lose their job will be expected to obtain another one within 30 days. After 30 days of unemployment, youth will be put on an **Extended Commitment Probation Contract**. Youth will be expected to keep a record of their job search efforts.
- Barriers will be clearly identified for youth who are struggling to meet extended commitment expectations and specific tasks, and case managers or social workers will implement interventions.

Independent Living Binder

- Youth will maintain an **Independent Living Binder** with all required paperwork including vital documents, employment paycheck stubs, school schedules, school transcripts, health documents, treatment documents, training documentation, tax information, etc. The binder will be reviewed during meetings with DCBS social workers and private child caring (PCC) staff.

*** Youth who lose their binder will be responsible for purchasing another one (\$20) from their program.

Transition Planning

- The regional independent living specialist will facilitate annual transition planning meetings with youth on extended commitment until they exit care. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure youth are developing the skills necessary to live independently, as well as a realistic plan for self-sufficiency upon transitioning out of care.

Milestones

- Each youth on extended commitment will be expected to work toward specific milestones. Milestones are achievements that demonstrate the mastery of independent living skills. Milestones will be discussed and made clear to youth at the intake meeting at their independent living program.
- The **Milestones Chart** and **Independent Living Binder** will be reviewed annually at transition meetings. Case managers/foster parents will use the **Milestones Chart** as a guide in providing services and resources and will refer to the chart during regular meetings with youth. DCBS and PCC staff will initial and date each milestone once it has been achieved by the youth.
- Youth who meet at least the required number of milestones at each age (15 at age 18, 10 at age 19, and 10 at age 20) will be given annual incentives. The annual incentives are:
 - Age 18 - \$50
 - Age 19 - \$75
 - Age 20 - \$100
- Youth on extended commitment are expected to participate in regional independent living events.
- All youth will be strongly encouraged to complete a short-term training or vocational program.

Rev. 4/2021

As funds allow, youth who complete a short-term training program, will receive a \$250 incentive.

Rent

- Independent living programs will withhold mandatory savings (program rent) from the youth's stipend each month and maintain it in a separate account. The agency will provide youth with a monthly statement of withholdings and savings balance. The agency will document the savings balance in their monthly contacts in TWIST and the **DPP-1294** report. The program rent will be as follows:
 - Age 18 - \$50 per month;
 - Age 19 - \$75 per month;
 - Age 20 - \$100 per month.
- Youth should only be given access to the funds prior to exit for the following:
 - The purchase of a vehicle;
 - Payment toward school debt; or
 - Housing expenses in preparation for leaving care (security deposit, etc.).

In these events, the agency should pay the vendor directly and not give the funds directly to the youth.

In the event the youth transfers to another agency's independent living program, the program should provide the savings to the new agency, rather than to the youth directly.

Changing Scattered Site Placements

- Youth should not transfer from one independent program to another unless they are returning to their home county or need to relocate for educational purposes.
- Youth should not transfer from one independent living program to another independent living program within the same county. Social workers who have concerns regarding the services provided by a program should contact the PCC liaison in central office for assistance.

Leaving Care

- Each youth age 18 and over will complete an exit survey upon leaving care. Social workers will ensure the exit survey has been completed prior to closing the case.
- Scattered site programs will provide youth with their savings upon exiting the program. Programs can recoup the cost of damages to the unit, up to \$500 from the youth's savings, after providing the youth with an itemized list of damages.

Foster Home Addendum

- Youth on extended commitment that are placed in foster homes or group home type placements should also be encouraged to work toward milestones. Foster parents, case managers, and independent living specialists should provide support and guidance toward this end.

- The primary focus of youth in high school should be to earn a diploma. As such, they are not required to work if they are attending high school full-time.
- Truancy will not be tolerated for high school students on extended commitment. Social workers should run attendance records on a monthly basis. Youth who are habitually truant will be put on an **Extended Commitment Probation Contract**.
- Youth in college will be expected to provide a copy of their school schedule and grades each semester. Youth will notify their social worker immediately if they drop classes and provide a new school schedule.
- Youth who have graduated from high school and are working are expected to open a savings account and save a portion of their income. The saved amount should be at least \$50 per month at age 18, at least \$75 per month at age 19, and at least \$100 per month at age 20. Employment paycheck stubs and savings account statements should be provided to DCBS and PCC staff to review every month.
- Youth in foster homes are also eligible to earn the annual incentives for completing the milestones.

Independent Living Milestones Checklist

Youth's name

DOB

18-Year-Old Milestones (Must Complete 15 for Incentive)

Staff Initials

- _____ Complete annual medical exam - **Mandatory**
- _____ Complete annual dental exam - **Mandatory**
- _____ Complete annual vision exam - **Mandatory**
- _____ Utilize a wellness benefit offered through their MCO
- _____ Gym membership
- _____ Register to vote
- _____ Register with selective service - males only - **Mandatory**
- _____ Obtain driving learner's permit or driver's license
- _____ Complete driver's education course (if doesn't already have license).
- _____ Open a bank account
- _____ Complete tax return
- _____ Save 25% of tax return with PCC
- _____ Develop education plan and discuss with case manager and/or foster parent
- _____ Provide school schedule and grades - **Mandatory**
- _____ Maintain at least a 2.0 overall grade point average
- _____ Provide monthly paystubs that verify employment - **Mandatory**
- _____ Maintain employment with the same employer for four out of 12 months (if working is part of youth's plan).
- _____ Earn raise at work
- _____ Receive a positive work evaluation
- _____ Save at least \$50 per month (program rent) - **Mandatory**
- _____ Submit their tuition waiver to college/university by July 15th (Fall semester), December 15th (Spring semester), and May 15th (Summer semester).
***** Confirmed by school account printout.**
- _____ Complete FAFSA form by October 30th
***** Confirmed by FAFSA email confirmation only.**
- _____ Complete college registration for college by July 15th (Fall semester), December 15th (Spring semester) and May 15th (Summer semester).
***** Confirmed by school schedule only.**
- _____ Complete college "To Do List", financial verification, etc. by July 15th (Fall semester), December 15th (Spring semester), and May 15th (Summer semester).
***** Confirmed by printout only.**
- _____ Complete free online financial literacy program
(www.cicmoney101.org/All-Tools.aspx)
- _____ Complete CareerOneStop's interest assessment
(www.careeronestop.org/toolkitcareers/interest-assessment.aspx).
- _____ Discuss Occupation Profile with case manager and/or foster parent:
<https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Careers/Occupations/occupation-profile.aspx>
- _____ Complete 5 Myplate quizzes (www.choosemyplate.gov/quiz)

- _____ Maintain mental health regimen
- _____ Obtain annual credit check (www.annualcreditreport.com)
- _____ Register for applicable housing program waiting lists
- _____ Participate in a regional independent living event
- _____ *Save at least 25% of their residual check from one semester.
- _____ *Save at least 25% of their residual check from two semesters.
- _____ * Confirmed by youth giving saved amount to PCC to put into savings account where rent is kept. Youth can only withdraw this amount for the purchase of a vehicle or insurance.

_____ (Milestone customized for individual youth by DCBS or PCC case manager)

_____ (Milestone customized for individual youth by DCBS or PCC case manager)

19-Year-Old Milestones (Must Complete 10 for Incentive)

Staff Initials

- _____ Complete Annual Medical Exam – **Mandatory**
- _____ Complete Annual Dental Exam - **Mandatory**
- _____ Complete Annual Vision Exam – **Mandatory**
- _____ Utilize a wellness benefit offered through their MCO.
- _____ Maintain mental health regimen
- _____ Gym membership
- _____ Obtain learner’s permit or driver’s license
- _____ Complete tax return
- _____ Save 25% of tax return with PCC
- _____ Develop and review education plan
- _____ Provide school schedule and grades - **Mandatory**
- _____ Maintain at least a 2.3 overall grade point average
- _____ Provide monthly paystubs that verify employment - **Mandatory**
- _____ Maintain employment with the same employer for six out of 12 months
- _____ Earn raise at work
- _____ Receive a positive work evaluation
- _____ Save at least \$75 per month (program rent) - **Mandatory**
- _____ Submit tuition waiver to college/university by July 15th (Fall semester), December 15th (Spring Semester), and May 15th (Summer semester).
- _____ ***** Confirmed by school account printout**
- _____ Submit FAFSA form by October 30th
- _____ ***** Confirmed by FAFSA email confirmation only**
- _____ Complete college registration for college by July 15th (Fall semester), December 15th (Spring semester), and May 15th (Summer semester).
- _____ ***** Confirmed by school schedule only**
- _____ Complete college “To Do List”, financial verification, etc. by July 15th (Fall semester), December 15th (Spring semester), and May 15th (Summer semester)
- _____ ***** Confirmed by printout only**
- _____ Complete CareerOneStop’s interest assessment (www.careeronestop.org/toolkitcareers/interest-assessment.aspx).
- _____ Discuss Occupation Profile with case manager and/or foster parent : <https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Careers/Occupations/occupation-profile.aspx>

_____ Complete 5 Myplate quizzes (www.choosemyplate.gov/quiz)

_____ Complete short-term, vocational training program

_____ Obtain annual credit check (www.annualcreditreport.com)

_____ Participate in a regional independent living event

_____ *Save at least 25% of their residual check from one semester

_____ *Save at least 25% of their residual check from two semesters

_____ * **Confirmed by youth giving saved amount to PCC to put into savings account where rent is kept. Youth can only withdraw this amount for the purchase of a vehicle or insurance.**

_____ (Milestone customized for individual youth by DCBS or PCC case manager)

_____ (Milestone customized for individual youth by DCBS or PCC case manager)

20-Year-Old Milestones (Must Complete 10 for Incentive)

Staff Initials

_____ Complete annual medical exam – **Mandatory**

_____ Complete annual dental exam - **Mandatory**

_____ Complete annual vision exam – **Mandatory**

_____ Utilize a wellness benefit offered through their MCO

_____ Maintain mental health regimen

_____ Gym membership

_____ Obtain driver's license

_____ Complete tax return

_____ Save 25% of tax return with PCC

_____ Provide school schedule and grades - **Mandatory**

_____ Maintain at least a 2.3 overall grade point average

_____ Provide monthly paystubs that verify employment - **Mandatory**

_____ Maintain employment with the same employer for eight out of 12 months

_____ Earn raise at work

_____ Receive a positive work evaluation

_____ Save at least \$100 per month (program rent) - **Mandatory**

_____ Submit tuition waiver to college/university by July 15th (Fall

Semester), December 15th (Spring semester), and May 15th (Summer semester)

_____ ***** Confirmed by school account printout**

_____ Complete FAFSA form by October 30th.

_____ ***** Confirmed by FAFSA email confirmation only**

_____ Complete college registration for college by July 15th (Fall semester),

December 15th (Spring semester), and May 15th (Summer semester)

_____ ***** Confirmed by school schedule only**

_____ Complete "To Do List", financial verification, etc. by July 15th (Fall

semester), December 15th (Spring semester), and May 15th (Summer semester).

_____ ***** Confirmed by printout only**

_____ Complete CareerOneStop's interest assessment

(www.careeronestop.org/toolkitcareers/interest-assessment.aspx)

_____ Discuss occupation profile with case manager and/or foster parent

<https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Careers/Occupations/occupation-profile.aspx>

_____ Complete 5 Myplate quizzes (www.choosemyplate.gov/quiz)

_____ Complete a vocational or short-term training program

- _____ Obtain annual credit check (www.annualcreditreport.com)
- _____ Apply for applicable housing programs
- _____ Participate in a regional independent living event
- _____ Develop self-sufficiency plan
- _____ *Save at least 25% of their residual check from one semester
- _____ *Save at least 25% of their residual check from two semesters
- _____ * **Confirmed by youth giving saved amount to PCC to put into savings account where rent is kept. Youth can only withdraw this amount for the purchase of a vehicle or insurance.**
- _____ Complete an exit survey
- _____ Save vital documents in ifoster virtual locker
- _____ _____
(Milestone customized for individual youth by DCBS or PCC case manager)
- _____ _____
(Milestone customized for individual youth by DCBS or PCC case manager)